

# Cyberbullying Among Tertiary Students: Self-Reported Prevalence And Nature Of Cyberbullying

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## Abstract

Technology advancement and increased access to the Internet have led to a social disorder called cyberbullying. This study aims to discuss the self-reported prevalence and the nature of cyberbullying among tertiary students. Learning more about the social and economic implications of this occurrence is vital. College students' perceptions of cyberbullying and the learning settings they experience there. To investigate one facet of the nuanced interaction between university students and diverse media, this literature review looks at the following studies. What possible effects might educational and social media have on college students' mental wellness and well-being? Because cyberbullying offenders break societal norms and interpersonal standards, cyberbullying can be seen as unfair and abnormal behavior. Additionally, they violate the privacy rights of those who have been victimized, who unjustly endure the negative effects of cyberbullying that endanger their mental health and ability to succeed in school. Thus, it is also essential to create awareness to reduce the occurrence of cyberbullying and put an end to it.

**Keyword:** Cyberbullying, tertiary students, nature of cyberbullying, prevalence, technology, online, bullying, cyber victimization, perpetrators.

## 1. Introduction

The Internet can have a psychological and social impact on the users, individuals are using the Internet for social communication, education purpose, general information retrieval and entertainment using e-mail, Facebook, chat rooms, gaming and many other social media. Even though the internet has many benefits, there has been much speculation about whether it can harm one's mental and social health. There has been an argument presented that the internet promotes social isolation and social incompetence, while others believe that increased interactions improve social relationships (Watts, April 2017).

Bullying is a major issue in our society today and occurs at a diverse range of ages and in a variety of forms. This is due to the increased use of technology; cyberbullying is an alarming trend worldwide. Cyberbullying can have detrimental effects on the victims, ranging from mental health issues to physical intimidation and isolation. As such, it is important to understand the impact of cyberbullying and find ways to effectively address it. It involves harassing others online, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by sending them messages, emails and text messages. It was mentioned that the modes of cyberbullying among students were posting photographs that downgrade and humiliate victims and writing offensive comments (Costales, May 21 2022).

This literature review aims to promote awareness of the prevalence of cyberbullying in tertiary education, among tertiary education students. Although studies regarding cyberbullying in tertiary education exist, further investigation is needed to examine attributes of cyberbullying, examine causes of cyberbullying and give recommendations for eliminating the problem, particularly among tertiary students.

## **2. Discussion**

### **2.1 What is cyberbullying?**

The increasing aggressiveness of cyberbullying has been an ongoing risk faced by many university students. An online platform, such as "The Student Room" ([www.thestudentroom.co.uk](http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk)) has alerted and highlighted the issue, accounting for how cyberbullying has impacted the students with long-term effects, such as self-esteem, emotional stability and well-being, as well as student's academics. (Cowie). Cyberbullying comprises extreme, aggressive behavior, through electronic means that in most cases targets vulnerable victims who are unable to defend themselves. In the initial days, cyberbullying was proposed to be a sub-category of traditional bullying, overlapping crucial differences between traditional and cyberbullying (Sourander, 2010). Noticeably, recent studies found that peers who have been targets already of traditional or face-to-face bullying are frequently

the targets of cyberbullying as well (dooley, 2010). However, there has been a constant debate among investigators about exactly what constitutes cyberbullying, and it can be tricky to compare results because different studies harness different criteria (Zych, 2016). The idea is an overlap that has been contested by a few recent research. For instance, (Law S. , 2012) implemented factor analysis to observe that, in contrast to traditional bullying and one for victimization, cyberbullying studies only involve single-factor victimization. Similarly, (Schultze-Krumbholz, 2015) discovered structural variations between traditional bullying and cyberbullying. They discovered that amongst the 6260 adolescents aged between 14 to 18 years old, from the six European nations had no exclusive victim class. Instead, they identified three groups of bullies, namely, bully-victims, innocent gullible victims and bystanders who were simply present but did not involve themselves in the incidents that occurred. A theory, according to the researchers suggests that cyber victims may have felt more empowered to retaliate against their attackers online than in the real world because the cyberbullying perpetrators in this study were likely to be experiencing bullying themselves. The absence of a distinct victim group in this study is in line with past investigations that reveal a connection between cyberbullying victimization and perpetrators (Kowalski G. S., 2014). We don't know the extent to which this happens at universities, and it's evident that more research is needed in this area because the only study we could find that took this overlap into account is (Campbell, 2012), & (Cleemput, 2008). As social networking sites proliferate and technology advances, cyberbullying spreads and evolves into a variety of other behaviors. As a result, the definition utilized by researchers has gained several new nuances; for example, see (Nocentini, 2010) however, case study evidence documents the growing risk of cyberbullying, such as:

- Sending abusive text messages, which could be considered threatening.
- Sending content that is sexist, racist, or homophobic.
- Making rude, spoofed, or quiet calls
- Making and disseminating offensive pictures or videos
- Delivering threatening or disturbing messages through chat rooms, online games, or social networks (often referred to as "trolling")
- Barring a person from online competitions, events, or organization
- Establishing online communities or hate sites for a specific person.
- Inciting young people to damage themselves.
- Voting in a poll abusively for or against someone

- Creating fictitious accounts, taking over, stealing or sharing content such as images and identities of someone to embarrass them, often known as revenge porn, which is a recently occurring phenomenon that involves ridiculing someone (<http://www.thestudentroom.co.uk/content.php?r=10841-Cyber-Bullying-Support>). The most common type of cyberbullying discovered in terms of revenge porn is denigration which entails distributing photographs for mockery, false rumors, gossiping and many more. Leading to further complications in cyberbullying. To better understand the issues, there remains a need for further, in-depth studies to understand its complexities and implications.

## 2.2 Types of Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is often regarded as a single construct where the many characteristics of cyberbullying appear to be dependent on cyberbullying experiences. Cyberbullying has been categorized in some research as occurring primarily online and via mobile devices (ortega, 2009). The distinguish between mobile phones and cyberbullying can be problematic as it constitutes the two main media of interest. This is caused by the risk of smartphone feasibility to communicate via emails and texts, as well as use it to access media in a much broader context. Hence, it blurs the ability to distinguish between mobile phone and internet bullying. Using the seven primary media that secondary school students identified. Cyberbullying has explored its way through various channels, such as texts, images or videos, emails, chatrooms, websites, instant messages, calls and many more. Similarly, (Patchin, 2010) employed a 9-item scale to measure cyber victimization across various media and (Wolf, 2011) employed a 5-item scale to assess related media, grouping some of them (e.g., text messages/mobile phone calls). While, In South Korea cyber bullying online, and video games have been notably found to be very common in the nation (Kwak, 2012). These lists of different forms of cyberaggression and bullying are not exhaustive, and new types of cyberbullying appear as technology advances. Examining the sort of activity or its content might be used as an alternative to examining the media that was used. (Willard, 2006) outlined seven categories, which are somewhat independent of the media used: flame, online harassment, cyberstalking, denigrations (put-downs), masquerade, outing, and exclusion. (Noret, 2010) described, in an English sample, the substance of abusive texts and emails. Threats of physical violence, acts of abuse or hatred, homophobic slurs, threats of murder, breakups of platonic relationships, and other 10 primary categories. Computers in Human Behavior 29 (2013) 26–32, R. Slonje et al. 27 sexual acts, requests or orders, ominous chain messages,

threats to break up already-existing relationships, and threats against the home or family.

(Chou, 2010) looked at several instances of cyberbullying behavior among victims, offenders and witnesses. The most prevalent behaviours reported by victims and cyberbullying were threats of harassment, followed by making jokes about, or making fun of, and finally spreading rumours. For observers, the process was different. The most frequent actions were making jokes about being intimidated or harassed and then talking. In our interviews, several students mentioned specific cyberbullying platforms such as IM, chat and online games. However, others spoke about the type of behaviour. Some expressed threats while others referenced both exclusive and hurtful comments. For instance, "that someone has videotaped someone or done something and uploaded it" ICT-based communication among youth is evolving quickly. Due to the proliferation of smartphones in recent years, consumers can now use their mobile devices for texting, calling, and browsing the Internet simultaneously. The popularity of social networking sites like "Myspace" and "Facebook" has risen quickly. Another recent development is Twitter. For instance, a college student was charged with making racist remarks on his Twitter account (Guardian, March 18th 2012). New terms are emerging, such as "sexting," which describes the uninvited transmission of sexualized images over mobile devices or the Internet, "trolling," which describes the posting of persistently offensive comments on websites, and "grieving," which describes harassing someone online. As new forms of cyberbullying and cyberaggression emerge, researchers in the field must stay current with these developments.

In conclusion, the variety of cyberbullying has been studied in terms of the primary media utilized (mobile phones, the Internet), more specialized ways of using ICT (text messages, Instant messaging, email, web pages), and by kind of conduct (threats, flaming, outing, exclusion).

### 2.3 Gender and Cyberbullying Interpretations

Researchers have suggested that there are differences between how male and female pupils experience and react to cyberbullying. Females are typically seen as the victims of cyberbullying, while males are seen as the perpetrators ((Faucher, 2014). According to Ringrose and Barajas' (2011) study, males are probable to experience cyberbullying via obscene, indecent content, therefore they hold no resentment or take offence while girls find receiving photographic content offensive and get offended.

An argument presented by some academics ((Menesini et al. & Whittaker & Kowalski), states that both, traditional and contemporary

bullying occurs when there is a disparity of power between the bully and the bullied. According to Menesini, Nocentini, Palladino, Frisén, Berne, Ortega-Ruiz, Calmaestra, Scheithauer, Schultze-Krumbholz, Luik and Naruskov (2012:459), a bullying attack occurs when the victim is upset and unable to defend herself or himself from the bully.

In most situations, this renders female victims defenceless against their attackers, but male victims may occasionally be able to protect themselves (Moletsane, 2018). Many people still struggle to comprehend and define cyberbullying; however, scholars have proposed various definitions. In accordance with the first description, cyberbullying is defined as "an aggressive, intentional act carried out by a group or individual, using electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself" (Smith, 2008:376). According to ((Piotrowski, 2012) "cyberbullying" refers to inappropriate, unwanted social interaction behaviours that are started by a perpetrator using wireless or online communication tools. Cyberbullying, according to (Willard, 2007:1), is the act of being unkind to others by sending or posting offensive content or acting in other types of social violence online. Additionally, Cyberbullying is defined as "electronic forms of peer harassment" by Strom and Strom (2006:21). Sexting, which is the act of delivering sexually explicit content by a phone text message, picture, or video, is included in the definition of cyberbullying, according to Van Ouytsel, Lu, Ponnet, Walrave, and Temple (2019:217). Girls who share semi-naked selfies to capture their classmates' attention and flaunt their sexual attractiveness provide the perfect environment for disparaging remarks. In this study, cyberbullying was defined as an unjustified, uninvited, cruel cyberattack carried out by identifiable or anonymous attackers with or without the goal of offending the target person or people. The Social Information Processing Theory (SIPT) was used in this study to try to comprehend the university students' gender differences in how they see, consider, and react to cyberbullying texts.

#### 2.4 Social Information Processing Theory

SIPT, propounded by Joseph Walther in 1992, seeks to understand how interpersonal communication occurs via computer technologies instead of face-to-face contact (Walther, 2005). Cultural considerations are critical to any interaction involving computer-mediated communication (CMC), according to SIPT (Olaniran, 2012:45). SIPT investigates how youngsters see, consider, and react to commonplace online communications or disparaging remarks.

Children's aggressive behavior is tied in accordance to how the victims perceive the messages received by them online. Therefore, depending on a variety of social characteristics, including age, gender,

cultural views, educational attainment, and prior experiences, among others, what one person may perceive as an attack, another person may not (Ridder, 2019). The mental operations used, in accordance with SIPT, influence how a victim person proceeds to produce a behavioural response. According to (Runions, 2013:10), who cites a few academics, SIPT should concentrate on "the real-time cognitive and emotional processes that influence how children make sense of their social experiences and respond behaviorally to social stimuli." According to (Rabiner, 2004), emotion is the force that organizes, strengthens, and weakens cognitive function. However, Joseph Walther contends that message interpretation is a multi-step process that involves the following six processes rather than a single reaction:

**Table 1. Message Interpretation**

<b>1)</b> Encoding, which is paying attention selectively to internal and external cues like facial expressions and verbalization.	<b>4)</b> Response access or construction, creation of potential replies to the issue.
<b>2)</b> Interpretation and mental representation, for example, attributing intent as a result of attention to a particular class.	<b>5)</b> Response evaluation and decision (i.e., determining the effectiveness of each potential response and accessing.
<b>3)</b> Clarification of goals, which is the choice of desired goals and outcomes of the situation.	<b>6)</b> Behavioral enactment. The likelihood that each option will result in the desired outcome.

Source: The Gendered Perspective of Cyberbullying: The Case of a Rural University in Limpopo (2022)

The victim database is updated after each procedure. Everybody has a database or repository where experiences are kept that affect how they process information the next time they receive new messages. To process new information that is received in the future, the stored experiences create associations, memories, and schemata (Lemerise, 2004).

### 2.5 Gendered Cyberbullying Techniques

The results of the survey revealed that most of the women experienced victimization on social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram because of their skin tone and physical attractiveness. For their skin tone and outward look, 30 (52%) girls

and only 4 (8%) guys received insults. The results of the poll also showed that 10 (17%) of the female participants had been called fat and shapeless and that 9 (16%) of the females said they had been called sex workers when they posted images of themselves on social media because of their attire and fair skin. In contrast, no male participant reported being termed a sexual promiscuity and only 2 (4%) of the 50 male respondents had their weight criticized. While no males acknowledged to being stalked or having their sex tapes leaked, six (10%) ladies claimed to have been stalked and three (5%) claimed that their prior partners had leaked their sex tapes. However, males primarily named Facebook and WhatsApp as the means of attack, and none mentioned Instagram. In WhatsApp class groups and Facebook posts, 17 (34%) of the male participants reported being termed thick or academically poor, and 10 (20%) reported hearing comments about their height, especially when posting images on social media. Twelve (24%) males reported being labelled drunkards, three (6%) stated they were mocked for being underprivileged, and two (4%) mentioned receiving xenophobic taunts on social media, while no females reported having been the target of similar attacks. Similar characteristics were also shown by interview data to the questionnaire replies. Almost every local university shared the unsightly photographs taken from the pageant saying "Look at these winners, how can the judges choose this kind of people, the make interviewee said. Male interviewee B claimed that the class WhatsApp group ridiculed him for bringing up unrelated issues. His classmates brought this up on his Facebook page, where he was made fun of for sharing photographs of himself having fun with friends while still having a hard time adjusting to university life. Male Respondent A insisted that when news reporters claimed that he had been bullied because he was small, he believed they were attempting to balance their story because the offenders had been focusing on his female counterpart rather than him. "The haters said I was unbecoming and did not deserve to have been crowned the face of the University since I am too dark and that I was wearing a horrendous dress at the pageant", Female Respondent A bemoaned. She went on to describe how a local comedian took the harassment on his program and mockingly said that the crowned lady was a joke and that she should go gather firewood in the forest rather than modelling. The other females who were interviewed all stated that the attacks were mostly motivated by body shaming since the perpetrators believed the victims' skin tone and outward appearance made them unattractive. The smaller ethnic group typically experiences a lot of attacks from the larger and more dominating groups, according to female respondent D. I'm Pedi, and since we are more powerful in the Capricorn district, there are fewer of us here. They always refer to me as a prostitute whenever I upload my image online. Others claim that



I have bleached skin. According to the same point of view, minority groups "are frequently perceived as inadequate and are also given a subordinate status that signals their lack of functionality in a given society," according to Chauke (2020:76).

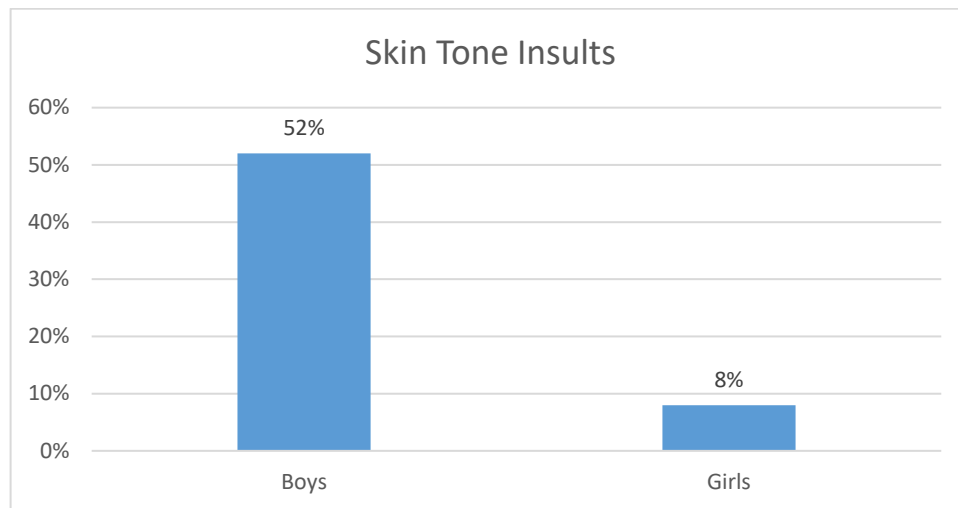


Figure 1. Above is this chart consisting of the percentage of skin tone insults males and females got. Boys 52% and girls 8%.

Source: The Gendered Perspective of Cyberbullying: The Case of a Rural University in Limpopo (2022)

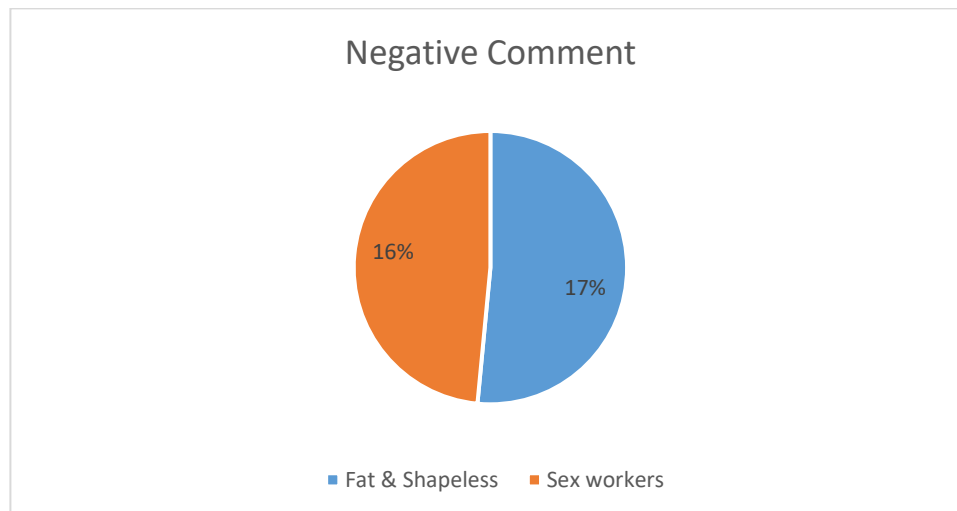


Figure 2. The pie chart above portrays the type and percentage of negative comments females received. 16% of the girls were being called sex workers when they posted images of themselves on social media while 17% of girls were being called fat and shapeless.

Source: The Gendered Perspective of Cyberbullying: The Case of a Rural University in Limpopo (2022)

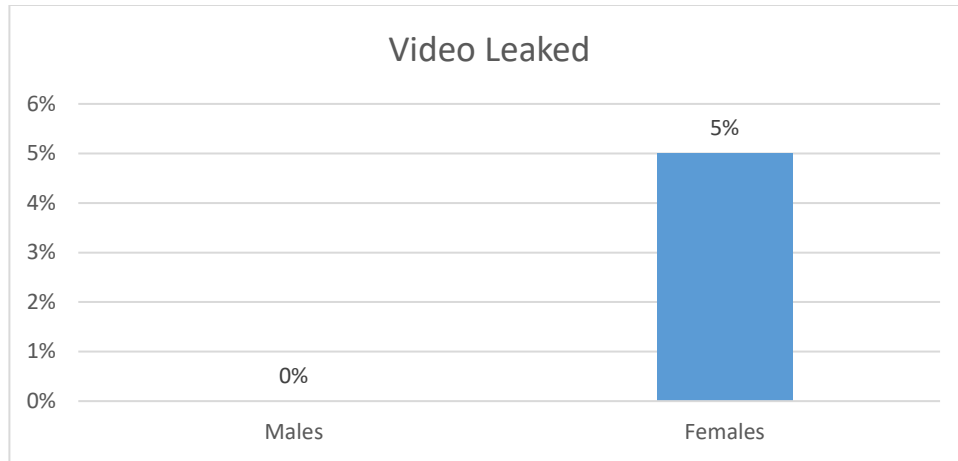


Figure 3. The data shown above is the percentage rage of the male and female videos being leaked by their previous partners. 0% of male videos were leaked while 5% of female videos were leaked.

Source: The Gendered Perspective of Cyberbullying: The Case of a Rural University in Limpopo (2022)

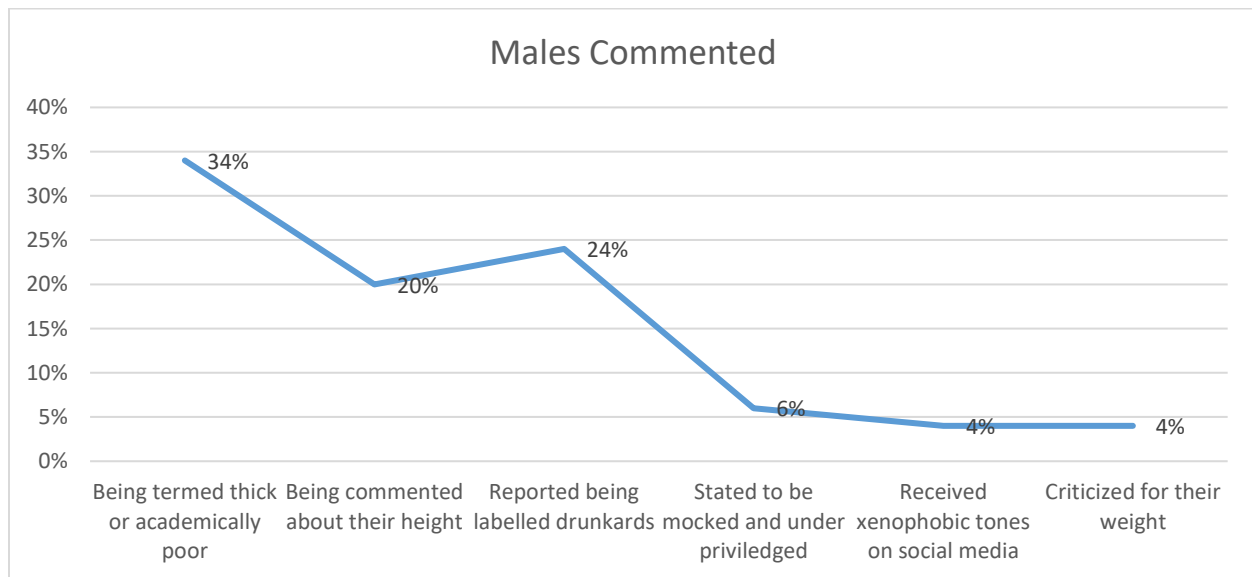


Figure 4. The above line graph shows that 34% of males were being termed thick or academically poor, 20% of males were being commented about their height, 24% of males reported being labelled as drunkards, 6% stated to be mocked and underprivileged, 4% of the males received xenophobic tones on social media and 4% of the males being criticized for their weight.

Source: The Gendered Perspective of Cyberbullying: The Case of a Rural University in Limpopo (2022)

## 2.6 Online Hate Speech Among University Students

With the development of the Internet and social networking sites, there is no question that bullying has now spread beyond traditional forms of bullying and into the internet. The term "online hate speech" as it is used now has evolved into a novel method of intimidating others. Researchers from across the world are gravely concerned about the rise of cyberbullying and online hate speech among young people, especially college students studying education because of the negative psychological and functional effects on online media users (Foody, 2015). Hate speech has a two-way impact, and both the targets and the purveyors of hate speech are the sufferers. The targets of hate speech are subjected to violence and genocide (Burke, 2017), while those who spread it are victims of cognitive disorders that prevent them from making their own decisions. The focus of this research is on the latter group of victims of hate speech. This group of victims' views assesses and renders verdicts on individuals in accordance with how those individuals have been characterized or stereotyped. For instance, in Nigeria, the long-standing separation among various tribes, classes, and faiths has given rise to numerous frames, stereotypes, and labels of the players, all of which are continually played up in all contexts, whether they be political, religious, or otherwise. According to David, Stefan, and Terracciano (2018), dysfunctional ideas may be to blame for erroneous communication about a person or ethnic group. Online content relating to hate speech is frequently posted by individuals who are driven by unreasonable beliefs. Therefore, David, Stefan, and Terracciano (2018) proposed that cognitive behavioural therapists could use cognitive skills, behavioural strategies, and emotional techniques to change or alter the irrational cognitions people have against others based on their culture, colour, gender, affiliation with a particular religion, or political views. These methods and strategies are motivated by behaviour and cognition.

## 2.7 Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

The interpretation of an event is reliant on cognitive process and response, according to (Beck's, 1995) cognitive behavioral therapy. According to (Beck, 1999), the cognitive interpretation of life events is linked to hatred, animosity, and rage. The responses are likely to be harmful and hostile if the cognitive process is regarded as an event. The individual may then exhibit hostility by using unwholesome remarks to harm another's reputation in society and politics. According to (Beck, 1999), the function of dichotomy is the incorrect coding of information, which is what hate speech does. Information that has been misrepresented is what fuels animosity. By making a poor decision, the option of choosing friends and enemies is presented. Conflict and genocide are sparked and encouraged by such destructive cognitive communication processes (Beck &

Deffenbacher, 2016; David, Stefan, & Terracciano, 2018). The victim(s) experience negative emotions when someone uses hate speech against them because of their ethnicity, colour, religion, or sexual orientation (Wiegand, 2017). The spreaders of hate speech may or may not be aware that language controls emotions (Wiegand, 2017). The researchers contend that cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) can reduce the online hate speech that is deeply affecting Nigerian university students if cognitive processes of information are linked to speech-associated negative attitudes and dysfunctional emotional reactions.

However, substantial research demonstrates that the CBT approach is remarkably effective at assisting people. It is well shown that cognitive behavioural techniques are effective at reducing improper behaviours, automatic thoughts (Amster, 2003), and undesirable emotions (Helgadóttir, et al., 2014). According to a study, the CBT approach enhances optimistic attitudes (Padesky, 2006). To that purpose, the effectiveness of CBT alters desirable behaviours and decreases psychological disorders like depression, anxiety, stress, and discomfort, among others (Mooney, 2012). Previous research demonstrated that CBT techniques have a significant impact on obtaining happiness, resilience, and quality traits. Participants exposed to a 6-week CBT training showed a considerable change in their dispositions toward life and in gratifying emotional reactions (Amster, 2003). Alternative coping mechanisms for problematic emotions and beliefs are also provided by CBT (Amster, 2003). For those who are being victimized and oppressed by hateful rhetoric, laws, and social structures, researchers have urged for evidence-based psychotherapy intervention (Society for Psychotherapy, 2018). Despite the detrimental effects that online victimization and tribal rejection have been demonstrated to have on student populations that extensively rely on technology, they have up till now been disregarded in internet research, particularly the psychotherapy treatment option (Fremouw S. &, 2012). In our view, there is currently a severe lack of psychiatric interventions for the troubling experiences of those who are the targets of online hate speech. Additionally, we are aware that some psychological cyberbullying interventions, but there aren't enough studies on them (Foody, 2015). Additional psychiatric interventions are advised in this regard (Foody, 2015), but none specifically address the emotional and cognitive defects of online hate speech victims. Due to these information gaps, previous research suggests that victims of psychological distress brought on by online hate speech also require intervention (Foody, 2015).

## 2.8 Conditions for an Expression to Be Included as Hate Speech

1) Endangering national security.	5) Expressing inequality.
2) Breaching public order.	6) Using language that could incite violence or distress.
3) Violating human rights.	7) Labeling'
4) Acting on an irrational emotion of hatred.	8) Using English as the language of expression and making the post public.

## 2.9 Cyberbullying as a Global Phenomenon

Inflicting injury or discomfort on others using information and communication technology is known as cyberbullying (Slonje, 2013). Additionally, it is a deliberate act of intimidation committed via electronic media that exacerbates the power disparity between the bullies and their targets ((Olweus, 2015). According to (Perren), cyberbullying can take many different forms, including sending offensive, rude, or threatening messages, spreading untrue information about someone online, collecting, disclosing, or publishing personal information, displaying someone's embarrassing or graphic photos, excluding someone from online communication, and online identity theft. Targeting people for their misbehaviour, shaming, and online stalking are some of the common reasons for cyberbullying (Douglas, 2016). The emotional effects of someone disclosing personal information online without permission may include anxiety, heightened dread, and worry about becoming the subject of unwanted attention and unpleasant assessment (Lin, 2016).

In contrast to conventional (physical) bullying, cyberbullying frequently takes place in anonymity and lasts around the clock (Baldry et al., 2015; Menesini et al., 2012; Wright, 2014). Despite being a worldwide phenomenon, cyberbullying seems to reflect cultural differences. For instance, there are significant regional differences in the ratio of male to female victims (al S. e., 2019). According to earlier research from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Australia, only prevalence rates between 5.3% to 31.5% of cyber violence were included (Grading, 2009). Cyberbullying prevalence rates ranged from 2.2% to 56.2% in research that used cyber victimization (Perren, 2010). The possibility of skewed metrics and an underestimation of the dynamic nature of cyberbullying may grow as a result of such incomplete assessment, which may not adequately represent the complexity of the phenomenon of cyberbullying (Berne, 2013).

### What is known about this topic?

- Cyberbullying is a widespread phenomenon that is becoming a bigger social problem in many countries.

### 3.0 The Seriousness of Cyberbullying

The university had a 36% cyberbullying prevalence rate. While 17.3% of the respondents in this set of respondents acknowledged having participated in bullying online. Cyberbullying was cited as a concern by somewhat more respondents (69.3% vs. 62.0%) for their friends than for themselves. However, 74.6% of those polled said that cyberbullying was a significant problem at universities generally. The data that 88.7% of respondents believed that cyberbullying was an infringement of their privacy and 90% incorrectly confirm this. Below is the graph showing the data mentioned above.

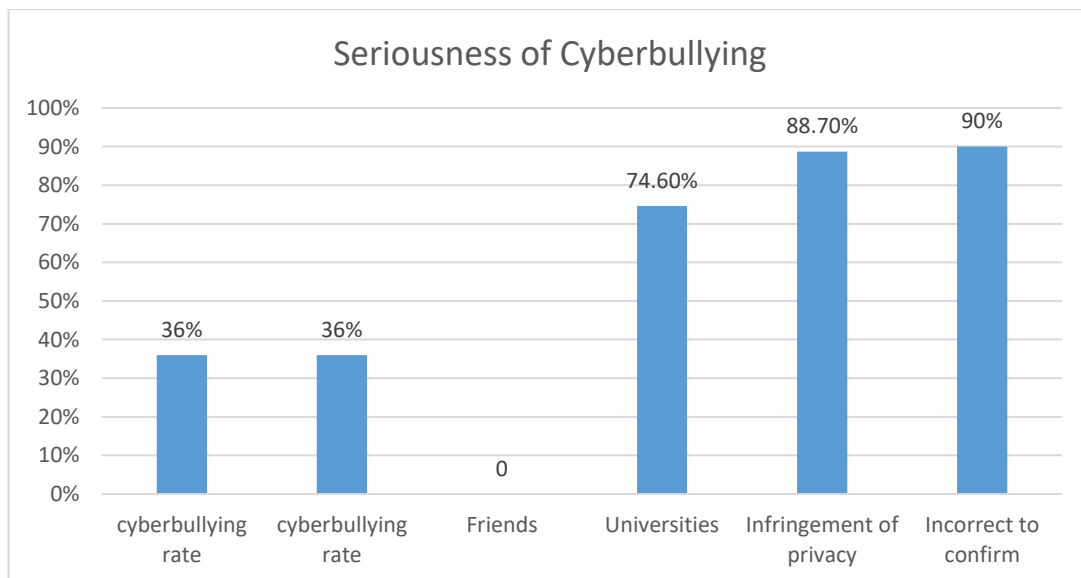


Figure 5. shows the seriousness of cyberbullying.

Source: Perceptions and experiences of cyberbullying amongst university students in the Eastern Cape province, South Africa (2021)

### 3.1 Prevention of Cyberbullying

As evidenced by 34% of respondents who stated that cyberbullying was mentioned in their classes and 73.3% of respondents who suggested that the problem should be included in the curriculum, cyberbullying was not addressed within the various courses the respondents were registered for. Only 28.7% of respondents who worked in university administration said they were aware of the institution's cyberbullying policy, and 87.4% said the institution could do more to raise student awareness of the issue. The correlation between two continuous variables is depicted using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The coefficient tells us how strong and in what direction the link is. A Pearson's test for the respondents' gender, year of study, and choice of social networking platform indicated the following significant differences:

- In comparison to postgraduate students, undergraduate students were more aware of cyberbullying ( $r = 0.170$ ;  $p 0.05$ ).
- Cyberbullying was a significant concern at the university by undergraduate students ( $r = 0.163$ ;  $p 0.05$ ).
- Female students said that their peers had a major problem with cyberbullying ( $r = 0.166$ ;  $p 0.05$ ).
- Facebook users said that cyberbullying was a significant problem at their school ( $r = 0.061$ ;  $p 0.05$ ).

### 3.2 Personality and Cyberbully Attitude

Every person, even undergraduate students, has a distinct personality that influences how they behave in both their personal and social contexts. A person's personality is crucial in recognizing cyberbullies. Many researchers concentrated on the Big Five Personality Traits and their influence on online bullying behaviour (67). Dark Triad is yet another essential form of personality construct. This construct addresses those elements that are more closely associated with harmful behaviours, such as online bullying. Narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism are all discussed in Dark Triad (35). Cold behaviour, dishonesty, and manipulation are terms used to describe Machiavellianism. The pathological kind of self-love known as narcissism has characteristics marked by sentiments of excess, entitlement, superiority, and power. Psychopathy describes a lack of empathy, a need for thrills, and a lack of fear (352). Bullying is a theme that runs across the Dark Triad worlds (68). As a recognized personal characteristic, personality may be one of the driving forces behind undergraduate students' cyberbullying activity (69). It has been suggested that personality traits are crucially important as explanatory factors for cyberbullying behaviour that includes victimization and aggression because studies have shown that this behaviour is common because of incorrect thinking, which in turn

increases aggression among individuals (70). Personality has been a very important psychological aspect in explaining the phenomenon of cyberbullying (71). However, the Study of (72) found no connection between a person's personality and their bullying behaviour. Because the results of earlier investigations are conflicting, the authors would like to hypothesize that.

- ❖ **H1:** Personality and attitude towards cyberbullying are strongly and significantly correlated.
- ❖ **H2:** The awareness of cyberbullying and the attitude towards it are negatively correlated.
- ❖ **H3:** Aggression and attitude toward cyberbullying are positively correlated.
- ❖ **H4:** Antisocial behaviour and a cyberbullying mindset have a beneficial association.
- ❖ **H5:** Internalizing conduct and the attitude of a cyberbully are positively correlated.
- ❖ **H6:** A cyberbullying mindset and self-esteem have a connection.
- ❖ **H7:** Attitude will significantly influence if someone plans to cyberbully.
- ❖ **H8:** Subjective norms will significantly improve cyberbullies' attitudes.
- ❖ **H9:** Perception of behavioural regulation will significantly increase the inclination to engage in cyberbullying.
- ❖ **H10:** Cyberbullying purposes will significantly influence cyberbullying conduct.
- ❖ **H11:** The association between cyberbullying intention and behaviour will be positively moderated by social media use.

### 3.3 Cyberbullying Awareness and Cyberbully Attitude

Due to the rising trend of undergraduate students becoming cyberbullies, cyberbullying has received a lot of attention during the past 10 years. According to accounts, students have unknowingly turned into cyberbullies in this situation (73). Due to their social environment, individuals assume that their attitudes and behaviour are typical, which has a negative effect. For example, making fun of students' participation in online troll activities as a form of pleasure demonstrates a lack of understanding because they do not recognize how this is ruining and harming their personalities (44). This is due to their ignorance about and inability to recognize cyberbullying. Additionally, it has been noted that some people who are aware of cyberbullying engross in the behaviour out of boredom or a desire to experiment with something new in the online realm (74).

### 3.4 Awareness

This area measured respondents' knowledge about cyber bullying in South Africa and their local schools. Most respondents (90.7%) have



heard of cyberbullying, and 66% are aware of particular instances of it that have happened outside of universities. Seventy per cent of respondents said they were aware of cyberbullying that took place at the university. 54.7 per cent of respondents thought they were educated about how South African legislation deals with cyberbullying. The outcomes are shown in the table below.

### 3.4 Anti-Social Behavior and Cyberbullying Attitude

Antisocial conduct is a collection of actions that make other people uncomfortable being near a person (82). Actions that raise concerns in society are referred to as anti-social behaviour. These include driving recklessly, trafficking drugs, arguing with other students, and exploiting public space. "Any conduct that infringes on another person's fundamental rights and any behaviour that is considered anti-social," according to the definition of anti-social behaviour damaging to other members of society" (83). Anti-social conduct can manifest in a wide variety of ways, including purposeful hostility and overt and covert unfriendliness. It has been noted that a person's primary and secondary socialization is where they develop anti-social behaviour (84). It always affects an adolescent's personality, intellectual ability, and engagement in unpleasant activities, which has an impact on the adolescent's ability to be tolerant and supportive. Such behaviour has frequently been characterized as being in opposition to accepted standards, ethics, morals, and social behaviour (85).

Antisocial persons are more likely to communicate with their friends and coworkers online, which increases their risk of developing depression and aggression (86). This may be the main cause of introverted students' tendency to become easily agitated during a brief debate. Since social media is their main platform for interaction (87), individuals might use it as a forum to express viewpoints that could later cause harm to others. Antisocial behaviour is not the cause of an individual's attitude toward cyberbullying, according to the study (88).

### 3.5 Internalizing Behavior and Cyberbullying Attitude

Actions that direct harmful energies upon oneself are referred to as internalizing conduct. In other words, those who engage in internalizing behaviours act in ways that hurt themselves rather than retaliate against others. The literature on social cognitive theory has demonstrated that several factors serve as antecedents in the cyberbullying mindset. The research also shows that internalizing conduct is strongly correlated with cyberbullying behaviour (89). On the other hand, those who score highly for internalizing behaviour are more likely to engage in cyberbullying conduct as well as form an attitude and a desire to do so (90), (91). Those who engage in

internalizing behaviour are frequently easy targets for cyberbullies. It is demonstrated that internalizing behaviour results in cyberbullying the fact that the same victim may later turn into a bully. The study (92) concluded that internalizing issues are traits of cyberbullying victims rather than cyber bullies.

### 3.6 Perceived Behavioral Control and Cyberbullying Intention

The ease with which a person can carry out a specific conduct is related to perceived behavioural control. Students think it is simpler for a cyberbully to disguise their identity and remain anonymous because it is done through technology. Because of this, they believe they will never be discovered and engage in cyberbullying (104). Additionally, kids who engage in cyberbullying may never understand the suffering that the victim will endure; as a result, they may believe that engaging in this behaviour is acceptable (107). This suggests that pupils who feel in control of the situation and won't be detected may develop the intention to engage in the specific action (105). The study of (100) examined the influence of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control on the intention to engage in cyberbullying. They discovered that an individual's desire to engage in cyberbullying is not significantly impacted by perceived behavioural control. Because the findings of earlier studies have been inconsistent, this study will use empirical testing to determine the precise nature of the relationship between perceived behavioural control and the purpose of cyberbullying.

### 3.7 Implication

Our findings suggest that the spread of false information is more accidental than deliberate because most of the young adults in our study have a propensity to do so because they don't check the information they get. According to the survey, young adults need to have better analytical and critical thinking skills, so they won't be so easily duped as to take things at face value. This is especially true for Gen Y and Z, who use social media the most and are therefore exposed to the widest variety of media content. We also place a strong emphasis on the need to enlighten both the general public and young people about the need for fact-checking material before disseminating it. Even though the majority of the people in our sample had college degrees, many of them were unaware of the local fact-checking website (*sebenarnya. my*), even though it has existed since 2017. To ensure that the general population is only consuming true news, the local government should consider advertising the website, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We concur with other researchers that support suitable training and claim that "knowledge and education are the best weapons against fake news" (McDougall et al., 2018; Valero and Oliveira, 2018 as referenced in

(Herrero-Diz, 2019). These researchers point out that one's perception is impacted by formal or informal instruction in the usage of new media. Furthermore, although not being the most common method for disseminating false information in this survey, social media nonetheless emerged as the main information source for young adults. Determining the legitimacy and truthfulness of the aforementioned information becomes a challenging process due to the fact that social media is simply brimming with information and diverse contents that are thought appealing and engaging. Because of this, it is important to increase one's social media literacy because a lack of knowledge and comprehension of the processes involved in creating new media content may hasten the spread of false information. We demand that initiatives aimed at enhancing social media literacy be implemented not only in schools and university institutions, but also with older generations in mind. Last but not least, technology-based interventions can be used to combat the spread of false information, according to Pennycook et al. (2020), who discovered that straightforward accuracy reminders (or nudging) enhance decisions about what to publish on social media.

### 3.8 Cyberbullying Trends

Using tactics that are linked to more beneficial results, those that aim to lessen the current, future bullying and victimization, is necessary for successfully coping with cyberbullying (Jacobs, 2013). Contrastingly, ineffective coping is linked to methods that don't appropriately handle the bullying and have unfavorable effects. It's crucial to look into how college students manage for two reasons. Despite the lack of research in this area, the literature on school-based cyberbullying places a strong emphasis on the link between victimization and inefficient coping (Perren S. &, 2013). According to studies from the traditional literature on bullying, teenagers' coping mechanisms, like asking for assistance from peers and adults, may be able to minimize the detrimental impacts of bullying on psychosocial outcomes. For instance, a 2007 study by Demaray found evidence to support the idea that social support helps protect victims of bullying from internalizing symptoms like anxious-depressive ones. However, it appears that many cyberbullying victims do not always use strategies like asking for assistance (Jackson, 2013). Between 50% and 90% of schoolchildren do not use any help-seeking strategies for cyberbullying, according to various studies (Smith, 2008). Instead, they react, ignore, evade, or do nothing to cope. These results support (Smith, 2000) claim that many bullied individuals experience resilience problems. When school children do employ beneficial techniques, they are more likely to turn to peers for assistance than to parents or teachers. For instance, (Brown, 2009) found that adolescent adolescents preferred to deal by initially alerting a friend,

then a parent, and finally school authorities, in the event of cybervictimization. One study looked at the various coping mechanisms employed by cyber victims in a university setting. According to (Fremouw S. a., 2012), American cyber victims between the ages of 18 and 24 tended to cope by telling someone, avoiding friends, and seeking retribution. These results suggest that while university cyber victims do engage in help-seeking behaviors, they also appear to employ more behaviors that are probably less helpful at reducing cyberbullying, such as seeking retaliation and avoiding social situations.

### 3.9 Victimization Status (i.e., Victim or Non-Victim), Gender, and Coping Strategies

Schools encourage one coping technique to fight bullying behaviors: asking for help (Mallet, 2012). However, it seems that a person's usage of this tactic can vary depending on things like gender and victimization status. For instance, secondary school students who had not experienced cyberbullying recommended telling someone as one of the most effective countermeasures to cyberbullying, according to (Smith, 2008). However, a closer examination revealed that many cybervictims kept their misfortune a secret. Adolescent cybervictims are significantly less likely than traditional victims to cope by asking teachers and friends for advice, according to other studies (Vollink, 2013). Due to uncertainty about the efficiency of these coping mechanisms as well as worries about an unwelcoming school environment, cybervictims may be less likely to use them (Cutts, 2012). There is no information to suggest that university students would ask for assistance from staff members, or that victimization status affects mitigation intentions for future cyberbullying. There is also a dearth of academic studies on how gender affects coping mechanisms for cyberbullying. However, research from schools has revealed that the coping mechanisms used by boys and girls are different. For instance, compared to girls, boys are less likely to employ help-seeking techniques to deal with cyberbullying (Dooley, 2010). However, guys seem to utilize retaliation more frequently than girls do (Machmutow, 2012). Our knowledge of gender-specific coping mechanisms for cyberbullying is likely to be improved by looking at how male and female university students intend to handle the situation.

### 4.0 Cyberbullying and the Law

Cyber bullying is not considered a crime in the United Kingdom despite the harassment, threatening behavior and defamation laws that apply in England and Wales. Therefore, under the Protection from Harassment Act of 1997, the Malicious Communications Act of 1988, Section 127 of the Communications Act of 2003, and the Public

Order Act of 1986, online bullying and abusing could be considered a criminal offense. Additionally, high-profile examples of online abuse directed towards feminists and female politicians as well as the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) study "New Technology, Same Old Problem" have brought attention to the manner in which social media is used to attack women and girls (Whitfield & Dustin, 2015). In actuality, EVAW are using a human rights-based position as opposed to a criminal law one, which, they contend, can hold the university liable for cyberbullying and associated conduct. Whitfield and Dustin (2015) pointed out that,

An institution may be violating a student's right to respect for her private life, which includes her psychological integrity, if it does nothing regarding online harassment and abuse, such as when its computers are used to send offensive information to or about female students. An institution must balance the qualified right of Article 10 (freedom of expression) against the woman's protection rights under Articles 3 and 8 (the right to be free from cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment and the right to respect for private and family life) when determining how to respond to the type of online harassment that many female students experience. (p. 13)

Law demands that all public schools in the United Kingdom, and particularly those in England and Wales, have a behavior code in place that outlines how to combat bullying of any form. On the other hand, universities are not required by any centralized regulation to have such anti-bullying measures in place. As a result, a legal minefield can be present in the context of a university. In order to emphasize the difficulties of the murky boundaries between cyberbullying and the law among the over-18 age group while within higher education, the divisive topic of "revenge porn" will be revived and discussed. A government effort in the United Kingdom has been spearheaded by the National Union of Students (NUS) and Universities United Kingdom (UUK) to address the problem of violence against women, harassment, and hate crimes on college campuses. In the fall of 2015, a UUK taskforce was formed to look into solutions for this rapidly expanding area of concern. In November 2016 (<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/Pages/taskforce-violence-against-women-hate-crime.aspx>), the taskforce will present its recommendations. There has been an increase in "revenge porn" and other activities related to sexual abuse on college campuses. According to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk), "...sharing of private, sexually explicit images or videos of another person without that person's consent and with the intention of causing them embarrassment or distress" is considered revenge porn. The Criminal Justice and Courts Act of 2015 declared revenge porn a crime in England and Wales. Without the consent of the subject of the content,

it is now against the law to release any sexually explicit photos or films ([www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)). Students who engage in such behavior are breaking the law, but as research on bullying and cyberbullying shows, such behavior is frequently dismissed as "banter," "harmless," "a little fun," "cyberbullying," and something that shouldn't be treated "too seriously." It will depend on who is defining and identifying the scenario, as is frequently the case. However, as stated by McGlynn and Rackley (2014),

"Revenge pornography" is not inherently erotic. Although the image may have been created in a sexual environment, its public release without the subject's permission is not usually done for pornographic reasons. It is a kind of intimidation, domination, and bullying. Without the subjects' consent, sexually explicit photos or films are posted online or threatened to be posted online as a means of intimidation, control, abuse, and bullying. It is a serious invasion of someone's privacy. (p. 2)

The subcategories of cyberbullying, in this case revenge porn, that must be studied, comprehended, and addressed at the university level are precisely these. The age of people participating is key since cyberbullying has the potential to get worse rather than better. Although it is in its infancy in the UK, research into cyberbullying and the sexual context has been taken into consideration in the US and Canada. Typically, university administration only acts in dire situations. One terrible example is Tyler Clementi, a student at Rutgers University in New Jersey who was caught on camera kissing another man. Tyler experienced a barrage of homophobic cyberbullying when the video was shared online, which led to his suicide. The Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act of 2015 is a piece of proposed legislation that would mandate that American colleges and universities that receive federal funding have policies that forbid harassment, including cyberbullying (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/1421>).

Without a terrible incident occurring on campus, it would seem that institutions would not be doing enough to stop tragedies from happening in the first place. Often of being a preventive measure, policies are often presented as a hasty response.

Along with the legal repercussions, the social context of cyberbullying activities must be addressed. Shariff and DeMartini (2016) brought attention to the issue of what they refer to as rape culture in higher education and its connections to cyberbullying. They contend that in order to start addressing the issue, research, legislation, and practice must all confront the problem's misogynistic and discriminatory underpinnings. This is what the EVAW is doing in terms of human rights, as was previously discussed. The repercussions for those who engage in cyberbullying are potentially very severe if they are found

guilty of doing so and face criminal prosecution. This prompts even more serious questions about accountability and who should address the issue: the university administration, the students, students' unions, the police, or the parents?

#### 4.1 Differences between Cyberbullying and Traditional Bullying

Numerous ways have been established that cyberbullying is different from regular bullying. (Smith, 2012) outlined seven characteristics: (1) It requires some level of technological know-how; (2) It is mostly indirect rather than face-to-face, and as a result, it may be anonymous.

Cyberbullying involves a wider range of spectator roles than most traditional forms of bullying (the bystander may be present when an act is sent or uploaded, with the offender when it is received, or with neither when viewing the relevant website); (3) In a similar vein, the offender often misses the victim's response, at least not right away; (4) the victim's reaction is typically not visible to the perpetrator in most cases; (5) While displaying (abusive) dominance over others in front of witnesses is one motivation for traditional bullying, the perpetrator will frequently lack this in cyberbullying. (6) In comparison to the small groups that are typically the target audience for traditional bullying, cyberbullying can reach particularly large audiences in a peer group, broadening the potential audience; (7) it is difficult to escape from cyberbullying (there is "no safe haven"), as the victim may be sent messages to their mobile or computer, or access hurtful website criticism, regardless of where they are.

When asked what they believed to be the largest distinction between regular bullying and cyberbullying, some kids in our interviews brought up the following points: The main problem is that you never know what might occur. And you're blind to what the other person does; in a sense, they're being stalked. If someone gets your mobile number, they can always get in touch with you and yes, traditional bullying is something that occurs face-to-face and may end by leaving home or doing something, according to a 13-year-old girl.

In conclusion, it has been discovered that cyberbullying is different from physical bullying in a variety of ways. These are not fundamental differences, but they may have an impact on other elements like the reasons why crimes are committed and how they affect victims (Pyzalski, 2011).

#### 4.2 Motives for Perpetration and Impact on Victims

(Cutts, 2010) conducted a qualitative study with 20 students between the ages of 15 and 19 and used semi-structured individual interviews to explore the motivations behind cyberbullying. They discovered that these motivations could be classified as either internal - no

repercussions, non-confrontational (when a cyberbully did not want to have a face-to-face encounter with the victim or expressed fear of actually facing the person) or that the target was different in some way, such as appearance.

Bullying has a negative impact on everyone involved, including victims. However, the distinctions made above may have an impact on the relative impact of traditional and cyberbullying. When it comes to the victim's impact or the perpetrator's motivation, the contrast between traditional bullying and cyberbullying can occasionally work both ways (Smith, 2008). Some factors, such as the size of the audience or anonymity, may particularly contribute to the negative impact. For instance, the potential size of the audience that cyberbullying may draw may make the victim feel worse since they may feel more humiliation and embarrassment (Smith, 2008). A benefit of this, however, is that the victim might more easily acquire assistance because adults might become aware of the incident because of the huge audience. This may help lessen the sense of isolation that comes with suffering.

If the offender does not see the victim, he or she can be less conscious of the repercussions and consequences of their actions. This has two sides as well. On the one hand, the perpetrator may be less likely to be motivated by the joy of seeing the victim suffer or the public display of dominance among peers. As a result, the bullying may last longer because there may be fewer possibilities for empathy or remorse without the direct feedback that traditional bullying may provide (Slonje, 2012). There were some hints in our student interviews that instances of cyberbullying did persist for longer lengths of time than instances of traditional bullying. They make spoof calls a lot, a lot, a lot. Three to four times a day for nearly a year, according to a kid 13; a female 15; and "on the internet and stuff, one dares to say more maybe than one would do in reality."

Ortega et al. (2009) analyzed the range of feelings that victims of traditional bullying (direct, indirect) or cyberbullying (mobile, internet) could experience. not bothered, embarrassed, angry, upset, stressed, worried, afraid, alone, defenseless, and depressed. More negative emotions were reported when being traditionally bullied, in particular being the victim of direct bullying, than in cyberbullying. Other research (Hinduja, 2006) shows that victims of cyberbullying express a variety of emotions such as: anger, sadness, frustration, embarrassment, stressed, fright, loneliness and depression.

The students we spoke with expressed a range of feelings, including helplessness, rage, grief, worry, loneliness, and frustration, like in the case of "I didn't sleep the whole evening." (Boy, 15) "It was creepy, anger and stuff! One then feels isolated and utterly alone. One



(female, 14) feels alienated. These feelings can also endure for a very long time; according to one student, she avoided her cyberbully even an additional 1.5 years after the incident if she saw her in the street. Some students, however, claimed they weren't upset because "I don't give a shit about what they said" (guy, 15).

Many studies (Ortega, 2009) also claim that some victims do "not feel bothered," despite the fact that many victims do experience discomfort following cyberbullying occurrences. According to Ortega et al. (2009), between 36% and 44% of respondents said they weren't disturbed, with Internet bullying having the highest frequency and mobile bullying having the lowest. According to Ortega et al. (2009), different forms of bullying may cause different emotions. For instance, more students who were victims of bullying via mobile phones reported feeling "worried," and these victims also typically experienced higher levels of fright, feelings of helplessness, and depression.

Future research must differentiate more clearly between the various forms and manifestations of cyberbullying, as was mentioned above. For instance, Smith et al. (2008) discovered that some categories (specifically photo/video clip bullying) were perceived as having a greater negative impact when compared to traditional forms of bullying, while others (like text message bullying) were perceived as having an equal or lesser impact. According to Straude-Muller, Hansen, and Voss (2012), "relational aggression is more serious than verbal and sexual harassment" because it "attacks the victim's social network with defamation and slurs on reputation." (p. 271). A few investigations (Mishna, Cook, Researchers (Johnson, 2009) have attempted to identify the specific aspects of cyberbullying that negatively affect the victims, and they hypothesize that anonymity and the lack of a safe haven may be the main factors.

We inquired about the emotions that various types of cyberbullying elicited from the adolescents we spoke with. Most claimed that regardless of how they had been bullied, it all felt horrible and produced comparable feelings. However, one pupil believed that text messaging was still preferable to instant messaging since "one writes much faster than one does on a mobile." So, you know, it keeps getting worse" (boy, 15). When asked which type of bullying—traditional or cyber—they thought was more destructive, those who thought cyberbullying was worse than traditional bullying (four students) cited the bully's anonymity and the fact that it might occur anywhere, at any time. Four students said they thought face-to-face bullying was worse than cyberbullying since there was no physical risk associated with face-to-face bullying, like in the following example: "Like face-to-face bullying, someone comes and says something. You can simply hop on him there to start a fight and trouble. However,

anyone may write anything online. There, nothing can happen" (boy, 15).

In conclusion, cyberbullying has an obviously detrimental effect, resulting in emotions like rage, fear, depression, and embarrassment. Because it is neither "real" nor tactile, some victims claim they are "not bothered" by it. However, some characteristics of cyberbullying, particularly anonymity, lack of a safe haven, and embarrassment due to the potential wide audience, can make the impact of cyberbullying especially strong, for some young people and in some circumstances. Overall, traditional bullying and cyberbullying appear to have broadly similar negative effects.

#### 4.3 School-based Intervention/Prevention

Programs aimed at combating traditional bullying abound, and as Ttofi and Farrington (2011) have shown, they frequently have a high success rate. It might be claimed that the incorporation of cyberbullying in these programs' elements—such as a whole-school anti-bullying policy, awareness-raising initiatives, and curriculum-based activities—can be done without major changes. An effective example of a broad anti-bullying program is the KiVa program in Finland, which mixes computer-based classroom activities and support for victims from high-status peers. Although KiVa was primarily developed to lessen traditional bullying, tests so far show that it is equally effective in doing so for a number of conventional types (Salmivalli, 2011).

Other anti-bullying programs promote the idea that it's crucial for the bully to comprehend what they've done (such as Pikas, (1989). In contrast to traditional bullying, this concept can be especially crucial in the context of cyberbullying. In a study by (Slonje, 2012) it was shown that students who had only physically harassed others reported feeling regret for their actions 70% of the time, compared to only 42% of those who had only bullied others online. There may also be less opportunities for empathy to develop if students do not feel bad about what they do.

One student made the following comment about the possibility of boosting the perpetrator's comprehension and empathy: "Well in some way, well what is hidden under is, well to grasp how it genuinely feels. And if one were to comprehend, one wouldn't bully. Therefore, yes. I don't really know how it works, but whomever bullies must be a fairly insecure person. Consequently, that is challenging. (Girl,13)

Another intervention that is occasionally used in traditional bullying is quality circles, where students in small groups gather information about an issue, use controlled discussion strategies, and come up with recommendations that are presented and taken into account by

teachers and the school. This has been successfully applied to prevent cyberbullying, and it is particularly helpful for educators attempting to keep up with the quickly changing trends in the forms of cyberbullying that kids are encountering (Paul, 2012). New technological advancements may also be helpful. In 2009, the Beat bullying charity in the United Kingdom introduced CyberMentors, a brand-new type of online peer support. Students receive training to serve as online mentors who can log on at any time. If further assistance is required, cybermentors can direct mentees to senior cybermentors and counselors. Banerjee, Robinson, and Smalley (2010) and Thompson and Smith (2011) gave this plan very favorable reviews. Moore, Nakano, Enomoto, and Suda (2012) provide a further illustration of a technology development directly related to cyberbullying by describing an automated method of not only identifying aggression online but also the issue of anonymity.

There aren't many interventions or prevention programs that deal explicitly with cyberbullying; an examination of the Campbell database by Mishna, Saini, and Solomon (2009b) identified just four short-term initiatives that had little impact. In England, for instance, Thompson, Robinson, and Smith (in press) evaluated two e-safety films that are used by secondary schools: Childnet International's Let's Fight It Together about cyberbullying and Child Exploitation and Online Protection's (CEOP) Exposed about sexting.

Students and staff gave both the videos and the tools a positive review (<http://bullyingandcyber.koinema.com/en/>).

In conclusion, initiatives that address physical bullying can frequently be expanded to address cyberbullying. Additionally, it is possible to take advantage of recent technological advancements (such as cybermentoring) and design targeted anti-cyberbullying interventions (such as movies, fact sheets, and websites).

#### 4.4 The Nature of Cyberbullying and what we can do about it

Bullying, which is a form of aggression, includes cyberbullying. This paper provides a brief overview of research, addresses three research obstacles, definitional concerns related to cyberbullying, and covers some fundamental findings regarding prevalence, age and gender disparities, predictors of engagement, effects, and correlates of involvement. It closes with information on coping mechanisms, evidence on whether cyberbullying is becoming worse, resources, advice, and intervention.

##### 4.4.1: Four phases of studies in the 'bullying' research programme

In a prior work (Smith, 2014a), I made the following hypothesis: "In what has developed into a significant research program focusing on school bullying, there have been four key study phases." The first

looked at the development of research between the 1970s and 1988. Particularly in light of the release of a self-report survey and the book *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys* by (Olweus, 1978). The first significant school-based intervention program was implemented in Norway between 1983 and 1985; as word of its effectiveness spread in 1988 and 1989, it served as the impetus for the subsequent stage.

Surveys were conducted outside of Scandinavia during the second phase, which spanned 1989 to the middle of the 1990s, and the first conferences involving Western and Japanese researchers also took place during this time. It was developed and used to nominate peers. Other nations, notably England, Belgium, and Canada, all saw interventions at this period. Additionally, in keeping with advances in our knowledge of forms of violence, the concept of bullying has been broadened to include relational and indirect manifestations, like social exclusion and rumormongering.

From the middle of the 1990s through 2004, the third phase saw the establishment of a global study program on bullying in schools. The creation of the participant role scale by Salmivalli and colleagues was a significant methodological advancement. In addition to Western Europe, Japan, and other nations, surveys and intervention efforts were now being reported from Eastern Europe, North America, and Australasia.

In 2004, with the rise of cyberbullying, a fourth phase began to emerge. Most press reports and awareness of the issue date back to before 2000, despite the fact that cyberbullying first appeared bullying started around 2004 and has since taken on a variety of forms, first via text message and then email. Bauman (2011), Li, Cross, and Smith (2012), Patchin and Hinduja (2012), Bauman, Walker, and Cross (2013a), Smith and Steffgen (2013), and Smith (2014b) are a few recent books on the subject. For two reviews, see Kowalski et al. (2014) (dedicated to cyberbullying) and Livingstone and Smith (2014) (more broadly on harms experienced by child users of online and mobile technologies).

#### 4.4.2: Definitional Issues

Aggression is generally understood to be an action with the goal to inflict harm; similarly, cyber-aggression would be an activity with the intent to cause harm while utilizing a mobile device or the internet. However, it is generally accepted that bullying is an aspect of aggression with the additional characteristics of repetition and power imbalance (Olweus, 1993). As a result, repeated violent acts against someone who is unable to defend themselves are considered bullying, as is "a systematic abuse of power." In accordance with this definition, cyberbullying is described as "an aggressive, intentional act carried

out by a group or individual, using mobile phones or the internet, repeatedly and over time against a victim who cannot easily defend him or herself" (Smith, 2008).

This type of approach builds on previous research on offline bullying, often known as conventional bullying, which includes physical and verbal abuse, deliberate social exclusion, and rumormongering. Therefore, bullying including a mobile device, or the internet is referred to as cyberbullying, sometimes known as electronic or online bullying. There is disagreement on whether it is proper to just carry over the definition in this manner, which is covered in more detail below. Additionally, some academics have used terminology that are more generic, such as online harassment (Patchin, 2010) or cyber victimization (Law S. a., 2010). The word POP was used by Vandebosch and van Cleemput (2009).

#### 4.4.3: Forms of cyberbullying

Figure 6 provides information on the usage of mobile devices and the internet for cyberbullying based on data from 1045 students, aged 12 to 17, who attended four English secondary schools in 2011. These are based on victim accounts from confidential surveys (students were asked to consider using smart phones to access the internet under the internet header if they had done so).

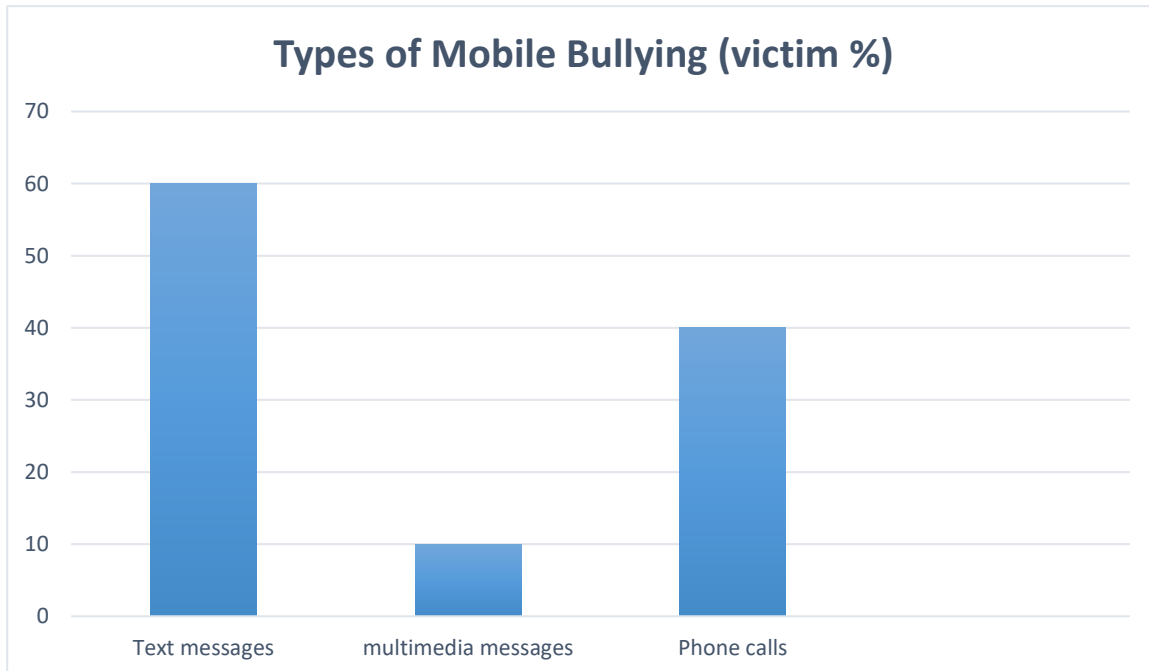


Figure 6. Types of Mobile bullying.

Source: The nature of cyberbullying and what we can do about it (2015)

#### 4.4.4: Forums of cyberbullying

These are based on victim accounts from anonymous questionnaires (students were asked to consider using smart phones to access the internet under the internet header if they had done so). Bullying on mobile devices is primarily done through text messages, but on the internet, social networking sites clearly outnumber emails, chat rooms, and other places.

Cyberbullying can take many different forms. Attacks and threats, denigration (putdowns), flaming (online verbal fights), cyberstalking (constant online intimidation), marginalization (from an online group), masquerade (pretending to be someone else to send/post content to destroy someone), excursion (sharing embarrassing data or images of someone), implementation up false resumes and providing private evidence against someone's wishes are some examples of common scenarios.

In a Polish sample, (Pyzalski, 2012) distinguished between different victim types who were attacked by 15-year-olds: those known only from the internet; those known conventionally (from school, place of residence); those known offline; close friends; random persons/unknown; former girlfriend/boyfriend; not individuals but Greek gods; and those not individuals but Greek gods.

#### 4.4.5: Differences from traditional bullying

There are several ways that cyberbullying is different from regular bullying:

- It depends on having at least a basic understanding of technology.
- Most bullying is indirect rather than direct, and some bullies may appear to be acting alone.
- Typically, the offender is not aware of the victim's response, at least not immediately.
- More complex bystander roles can be found in cyberbullying.
- The breadth of the potential audience is increased.
- It is challenging to get away from.

These distinctions are important when defining cyberbullying, understanding the motivations of perpetrators, potential consequences on victims, and the best ways to intervene.

#### 4.4.6: Age and Gender Differences

Reviews of pertinent studies (Kowalski, 2014) suggest that cyberbullying perpetration tends to increase with age (more than being a victim) and that there may be a peak of involvement around 15 years - which would be slightly later than the peak of involvement for traditional bullying. This difference may be due to a greater

opportunity and skill set for older children when using mobile devices and the internet.

The inconsistent nature of gender findings is notable.

The vast majority of studies on traditional bullying reveal that boys are more likely to engage in the act and that victims are more likely to be male than female. The research on cyberbullying has produced a wide range of results. Girls' interest in cyberbullying appears to be higher than their interest in regular bullying, though. This could be because cyberbullying is more appropriate for girls. After all, it often entails reputation damage rather than physical strength, particularly now that so much cyberbullying occurs via social networking sites, which girls are more interested in (Kowalski W. a., 2015).

#### 4.4.7: Coping strategies for cyberbullying

What should teenagers do if they experience cyberbullying? Data from a 2011 survey of 1045 pupils in four English secondary schools between the ages of 12 and 17 are presented in Table 1. These tactics were reportedly used by victims and are listed separately for online bullying and bullying that occurs on mobile devices. It seems clear that reporting bullying to a friend first, then a parent is far more likely than reporting it to a teacher in both cases of mobile and online bullying. Additionally, more than 25% of respondents stated they disregarded it.

An investigation of coping mechanisms in a sample of 16-year-old adolescents in mainland China reveals some features that are similar and suggests that traditional bullying may have some beneficial benefits in lowering cyberbullying as well. The Finnish KiVa program and the Austrian ViSC Social Competence Program both reported similar outcomes (Grading, 2015).

We do, however, also require resources and interventions that are more explicitly geared at combating cyberbullying. There is a clear need to ensure that cyberbullying is specifically addressed in school anti-bullying policies (Smith et., 2012), as well as generally in anti-bullying resources for schools, teacher training resources for anti-bullying work, advice for parents, and advice for kids and young people. Numerous organizations and websites do offer resources, such as the Anti-Bullying Alliance in the UK (<http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk>), Childnet International (<http://childnet-int.org/>), Childline (<http://www.childline.org.uk>), Kidscape (<http://www.kidscape.org.uk>), the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (<http://www.nspcc.org.uk>), and Young Minds.

Visit <http://www.cybertraining-project.org> to access CyberTraining - A Research-Based European Training Manual on Cyberbullying in

Europe. This is a training manual on cyberbullying for trainers working with various target groups, such as students, parents, teachers, or entire schools. It was based on an EU-funded initiative from 2008 to 2010. It is accessible online as a user-friendly eBook in the following languages: English, German, Spanish, French, and Portuguese.

CyberMentors, a promising program from Beatbullying (Kaenel-Platt and Douglas, 2012), was another. This new type of virtual peer help first appeared in 2008. Youth participated in 2-day training courses and then received online mentoring. This was protected by a software filter, anonymous, and supported by senior cyber mentors and counsellors in addition to a website (<http://www.cybermentors.org.uk>). The program was examined in the UK (see Smith, 2014a), with generally positive results, albeit it was strongly advised that more boys participate. It was implemented in six other European nations between 2013 and 2014. Unfortunately, this promising effort is currently halted because the Beatbullying organization filed for bankruptcy in November 2014.

#### 4.4 Cyberbullying: The hidden side of college students

School violence is a current debate subject and one of the key issues that worry kids and educational experts. According to the literature, there has been a rise in violence in educational settings (Li, 2006), which has had worsened effects on students' socio-affective development and teaching and learning processes (Glover, Gough, Johnson, & Cartwright, 2000). Adolescents spend most of their time at school, as well.

As a result, it is a crucial setting for intellectual and social growth. According to some studies, academic performance is worse among children in schools with higher bullying rates. (2013) Strm, Thoresen, Wentzel-Larsen, and Dyb. Due to the growth and development of information, many children and teenagers experience this type of abuse at home and in schools. Information and communication technology. This insecurity is evident at all grade levels, even in university settings, thus research on the many types of bullying is essential to better understand how it happens, how students may handle it, and ultimately, how it can be prevented. The risks and dangers associated with ICT also rise as they are more often used in classrooms because they encourage independent, creative communication and interaction (Li, 2006). To be more specific, the rapid development of ICT (such as the Internet and cell phones) has given bullies more opportunities (Li, 2006, 2008) in that teens' increased use of or abuse of these technological tools has given rise to a new type of bullying, known as cyberbullying (Beran & Li, 2007). Given that it begins in elementary school and persists through higher education with increasing frequency and intensity both within and



outside of schools (Hinduja & Patchin, 2009), cyberbullying has a significant impact on the lives of kids and teenagers. Due to these problems and the fact that cyberbullying has detrimental psychological and physical effects that may have an impact on interpersonal relationships.

#### 4.5 Cyberbullying among University Students: Gendered Experiences, Impacts, and Perspectives

ICT has benefited the youths of today as well as the adults during the past few years, with an increasing percentage of internet and mobile access. Gender inequalities may occur, according to research on how "emerging adults" use ICT. Emailing, social networking, and texting seem to be more popular among young women than young men [1-3]. The expressive language and significantly more emotional content used by young women in blogs, instant messages, social networking, and other platforms are distinctive [4]; in certain situations, this aids in their psychosocial development and social integration [5, 6]. Even extensive Internet use (30 or more hours per week), according to Miltsov's research [7], has no negative effects on women's wellness. However, this is not the case for men. However, according to Chen and Tzeng's research [8], the type of usage, not the quantity, is a stronger indicator of academic performance and psychosocial adjustment. Additionally, the portability of the devices may be more appealing to young women who "may feel stronger ties to their cell phone than college-aged [sic] males because it allows for independence to pursue their interests while also being instantly accessible when they are needed by family members or friends" [9, page 2179]. The topic of this essay, cyberbullying, is one of several hazards or drawbacks that go along with the benefits. As we go into a more recent field of research, cyberbullying at the university level, we build on our knowledge of cyberbullying at the middle school and high school levels. University-level cyberbullying can be considered a transitional stage in the continuum of this behaviour from childhood and adolescence to maturity. Cyberbullying scholarship has started to look at the similarities and differences between cyberbullying that takes place in K-12 settings, colleges, workplaces, and beyond [10-17].

#### 4.6 College students' perspectives on cyber bullying

In contemporary society, cyberbullying is an increasing problem because of technological developments that are taking place. While the term "cyberbullying" refers to persistent, unwanted harassment that takes place online, there are various definitions explored in the literature that center on physical harm threats, online violence, and the usage of particular technologies such as webcams (Sabella,

Patchin, & Hinduja, 2013). technologies (Adams & Lawrence, 2011; Kraft & Wang, 2010).

Cyberbullying can have long-lasting repercussions on victims, and more research is required to understand the environment in which it happens. Better consensus is needed for a definite description, though. Traditional bullying is frequently restricted to the schoolyard; however, cyberbullying may happen whenever it wants through text messages, emails, or social media. There can be more victimization regularly. Victims of cyberbullying have detailed side effects including mental (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Kaminski & Fang, 2009; Roland, 2002; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012) Distress, anxiety, and loneliness. Unfortunately, some cyber victims have committed suicide, and the media has drawn attention to examples like Tyler Clementi and Jessica Logan. For instance, Tyler's college roommate videotaped and live streamed online his sexual encounter with another man. Three days later, Tyler committed suicide (Foderaro, 2010). Similarly, to this, Jessica Logan experienced cyberbullying through text messages after her ex-boyfriend sent hundreds of teenagers a naked photo of her. Before taking her own life, Jessica was subjected to a significant deal of abuse and teasing (Wells, 2012). More information on the causes of students' inappropriate use of technology is necessary in light of the catastrophic effects on these lives. Additionally, considering that these specific incidents included college-age students, it is critical to consider how older kids are impacted by cyberbullying.

It makes sense to assume that college students experience cyberbullying because it happens in high schools (Hinduja & Patchin, 2007; Hinduja & Patchin, 2010; Kaminski & Fang, 2009; Patchin & Hinduja, 2010; Roland, 2002), as well as in the workplace (Privitera & Campbell, 2009; Science Daily., 2012). According to one study (Kraft & Wang, 2010), high school cyberbullying may potentially result in more cyberbullying in college. According to studies by Kraft & Wang (2010), McDonald & Roberts-Pittman (2010), Schenk & Fremouw (2012), and Walker, Sockman, & Koehn (2011), cyberbullying at the college level can include spreading rumours, faking someone's identity, and receiving threatening text messages.

Given their age and maturity, how much of a meaningful impact does cyberbullying have on college students? To comprehend the effects of college-level cyberbullying on mental health, researchers have attempted to characterize its effects. According to a recent study (Schenk & Fremouw, 2012), college cyber victims' psychological states were marked by interpersonal sensitivity, melancholy, aggression, and psychotic behaviours as compared to controls. Cyber victims changed their behaviour, becoming less trusting of others and staying away from particular situations (Crosslin & Crosslin, 2014; Schenk & Fremouw, 2012). Cyberbullies themselves also demonstrated

psychological repercussions as a result of the victimization, so it wasn't just the cyber victims who were affected. It's interesting to note that, in contrast to controls, cyberbullies reported higher levels of hostility, violence, and drug offences while exhibiting many of the same symptoms as victims (Schenk, 2013).

### **3. Way forward**

#### **Recommendations**

The study's findings led the researchers to make several recommendations for the new norm in education, including the following, Strengthening the school's anti-cyberbullying campaign, especially in light of the new standards and the fact that everyone is switching to an online learning environment as a result of greater exposure to and usage of technology in this regard. Students' awareness of and ability to report cyberbullying activity, whether they were a victim or a witness, must increase. To deal with and assist victims of cyberbullying, an institutional policy or framework should be formed or written with the assistance of the guidance counsellor at the school. Promotion of healthy technical, digital, and online learning platforms for good behaviour, politeness, and discipline in both online and offline contexts.

#### **Limitations and future directions**

The first restriction of the study is the use of self-reporting questionnaire surveys, which are quick and easy to conduct and are effective for supplying the study's quantitative data. However, the method may lead to problems such as social desirability bias and false reporting, in which the respondents choose to give a socially acceptable response instead of their genuine feelings (Brenna, 2016). Therefore, future research could use a mixed-method approach that includes interviews and focus group studies to help address this problem and to provide participants with a greater understanding of the subject under investigation. Additionally, the convenience sampling method utilized in this study oversampled the student population; hence, using multiple methods of data collection might also aid in removing any potential biases. The convenience sampling strategy used in this study should be taken into consideration when generalizing the results. Future research could use an alternate approach to increase the sample size and guarantee an objective study population.

Second, a person's self-perception was used to gauge how well they believed they could spot false information. Future studies should use alternative methods of assessment, such as experiments in which participants must distinguish between fake and real news. Silverman and Singer-Vine, (2016), as this may not give an accurate insight into

one's capacity to do so. Finally, a comparable statistic was used to determine if someone had inadvertently spread bogus news (i.e. respondents). In situations where people are unsure of their behaviour, they think that they did. In particular, when respondents are unsure whether a piece of news is fake or if they have shared the said news "unknowingly," experiment-based approaches similar to those suggested in identifying fake news (Allcot, 2017) may offer a more accurate insight into respondents' sharing behaviour.

#### 4. Conclusion

At this point, the researcher has drawn the following conclusions from the study's findings; there is no proof of such an occurrence in higher education institutions, based on the incidence of cyberbullying. During the poll, the respondents "never" reported being the victim of or engaging in cyberbullying. When the kids were classified by age, the statistical analysis revealed substantial differences in how they responded to becoming the victims of cyberbullying. Additionally, the course and sponsorship/scholarship for cyberbullying offenders showed substantial variations. Additional statistical analysis revealed modest and adverse correlations between average family wealth, GWA/GPA, and victims of cyberbullying. The study also noted the identical statistical effect for perpetrators.

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